

jennifer z

Erica's story

A photograph of a neon sign at night. The sign features large, glowing orange letters 'E' and 'L' in the foreground. In the background, there are other neon elements, including a blue sign with a stylized figure and a pink sign with a circular design. The scene is dark, with the neon providing the primary light source.

BookRix-Edition

Essay

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Erica's story

dedicated to my mom diane

Life is a struggle, a struggle-she sighed. She wants so much to be happy. Happiness is her major desire in life. Her whole life she had felt unwanted, almost ignored , by her parents. She went through school and got high grades as a way to get their attention . They never noticed. AS much as she tried to please them , it never seemed to work. Originally, going to college was another attempt as getting their approval, but to no avail.

God was her only source of comfort. As a young follower of Christ, her future dealings with her parents were within her grasp. She had to make a decision about college. What she wanted to take as a career choice was her query.

"Mom , i need your suggestion in what i should take for college this semester." Sheila folded laundry in silence, ignoring her daughters question.

"Erica , i want you to go take pepper for a walk", she instructed.

Erica sighed and walked to get the leash. Calling pepper, out the door they went in a flash.

Mom never listens. Her eyes watered and she silently started to weep as she walked. Blaming herself, she walked down the street with pepper and she went around the corner. Not understanding why her mom was silent ate away at her. what did i do ? she sobbed.

Walking blindly down the street , she made a quick left and walked unseeingly down the side of the road. A car came rather close to her and she jumped back. The owner just missed her. Stopping the car, he backed up and watched her as she walked.

Sorry , he yelled, I didn't see ya. Be more careful.

In a hurry ,he glanced behind him and drove away.

Erica watched him in silence. She gave the matter some thought as she walked.

" i have to be more careful . " she acknowledged to herself . " But he was in so much of a hurry. I don't even know who that

was. "

She turned pepper around and headed back home. She thought more of college as she entered the house.

What do i want to be? What would make mom notice me and be more attentive?

Barking at the next door neighbor, pepper was very noisy. "I'm glad we are back," she scolded pepper. "You'll wake the whole neighborhood up."

Finishing high school when she was eighteen, she had worked as a hair cutter for a couple of years to save money. She almost had enough money saved up for college. Paying board to her parents made it hard for her to save up money though. Her father is always working and her mother rarely talked.

Alone in her thoughts, Erica felt a quiver of unrest in her spirit as she walked through the door.

Her mother was in the garden by that point. Planting flowers, she had a distant look on her face.

"why would you bother with college, it's a waste of time," she called.

Angry at her lack of encouragement, Erica went towards work. She prayed, "Why is she so distant to me God?"

Cutting hair was her only source of income. Cindy smiled as she walked in "hard morning, huh?"

Her boss cared about her. It was obvious. Smiling her thanks, she got to the point. "My mom has no idea how important college is to me. She told me it was a waste of time."

Cindy listened in silence, very attentive to her plea for understanding. "College is never a waste of time," Cindy corrected.

Erica's eyes were glossy. Unable to talk more, She turned and began cutting hair.

Cindy saw her look away and was concerned. She was

becoming more introverted, not talking much.

She could see her struggle in her actions, Her eyes gave away that she had been crying. Her mom must be treating her bad , she reasoned. That probably why her eyes look so sad.

Continuing he answer, matter of factly, " I asked her what i should go to college for and she ignored me.

Cindy stated" what do you like?"

Smiling with shy wonder, she stated " I want to be a teacher."

"Then a teacher you shall be," Cindy encouraged.

On her way home from work ,she thought about how much she wanted to become a teacher. She had almost enough money to pay for her first four classes. She wanted to attend part -time at first. The college was a fifteen minute walk from her house. She knew she would have to continue her job as she attended.

"I have to get an apartment too , i know."

She thought about Sunday school at church. She longed to teach children. She decided "I'll follow my heart and go for teaching."

This was the turning point of her life. She decided she didn't care what her mom thought about her decision to become a teacher. She just wanted to do what she deemed best. " i don't care what she thinks." she thought. But deep inside , she did care.

Looking for an apartment was a task that required time and patience. She knew her income would limit her choices. I need an apartment for seven-hundred and fifty or less. She made around three-hundred a week cutting hair. She had twelve hundred saved up. Her parent's made her pay one hundred a week for rent. She knew it was less money to live home, but she needed to get away from her mother."

"She's making me depressed, I need to live somewhere else.
" she told Cindy.

Cindy agreed with her and said "Maybe if you weren't living together you may get along better. " "I doubt that ." Erica replied.

Cindy offered to help her move when she was ready.

Erica's love life was pathetic! She would date occasionally , but she didn't have a steady guy.

She loved Jesus with all her heart and she continued to attend church while she prepared to move from her parents house.

She found an apartment closer to the college. It was small ,but nice. She had a small kitchen ,one bedroom, and a bathroom. It was on the second floor of a small retail outlet store.

The store was underneath the apartment actually. The landlord seemed nice. She wasn't sure where she had seen him before. He looked rather familiar to her actually like she had meet him in the past or something. The rent was reasonable and it was close range to the college (within walking distance), so she decided after much deliberation to move there.

Later, she told Cindy of her find. Cindy was excited for her and asked her when she would move in.

" Well , actually , as soon as I can . " stated Erica." I have no furniture so all i need to move is my cd player,my computer and my clothes." She also had a couple of books . She would leave the dresser at home. While her parents weren't home , she moved out and into her new apartment.

Cindy encouraged her not to leave so suddenly, but Erica didn't want conflict.

It angered Cindy to see her so upset , leaving her parents house. She secretly wished she knew the true story of why she had to leave , but she didn't dare ask. She just gently helped her pack her stuff (2 outfits, a couple of jeans ,some

shoes, her work clothes). Then she left her mom a note stating:

"Mom , I can't stay here anymore, i decided to move.
I'm sorry . Erica"

Erica thought about her parents for a little bit. Feeling depressed, she thought "why don't they spend time with me ? my dad is so busy and my mom never talks < I can't understand why . Maybe I should call and ask her sometime, but i'm afraid to. She is so mean . All she does is tell me to walk pepper or make supper or clean. She never sits down and talks to me unless she wants something . I guess that's just how people are. She didn't even ask me my phone number or if i had a phone., which i don't .I should get a phone." she mused.

Her landlord knocked on her door."hello ,i'm randy . Nice to meet you finally." "Do you have any pets?

"NO i don't " Erica said."you seem rather young to have an apartment complex."" Sorry to be so to the point."

"Remember me, i almost ran you over a few weeks back while you were walking. Sorry about that." randy replied.

"would you like to go out to dinner sometime?"

"Sure , i wouldn't mind. " Erica shyly replied.

"Why don't we going out friday night then? just to get to

know each other, I have to go now , i have work."

"Sure no problem." He seemed rather nice ,but looks can be deceiving . I'll see how he is on friday. whether i like him or not . Why not go on the date though, it wouldn't hurt.

Cindy was happy Erica had something to look forward to . She was still a little worried about Erica though because she was so downcast. I wish she would talk, Cindy sighed to herself.

Erica left her house because her mom spend no time with her and she needed to go on with her life and make something of herself. So she left home as a way of starting new ,so to say.
She thought about it and started laughing, "i must have been nervous, i forgot to tell him my name, " she told Cindy at work later that afternoon.

Cindy just smiled "so do you like him? how's your mom"?

"my mom hasn't talked to me since i left. i guess she doesn't care too much about me and my whereabouts . She probably is glad i'm gone. i don't know him that well to know whether i like him or not . We have a date on friday to get to know each other. i wanna take it slow I'm afraid of relationships in general. I don't like commitment."stated Erica.

Why?asked Cindy.

"I afraid i will end up like my mom." replied Erica.

"my mom is very nasty to my dad and he treats her badly back and i don't want that for me."

"so i'd rather not be in a relationship."But i never said i wouldn't date occasionally just to get out of the house nothing serious mind you , Just to have fun" -she thought. She was looking forward to her date on friday. She was bored and she needed something to do with her time besides work. This was an opportunity to socialize and she looked forward to it. she also looked forward to starting college next week.

Friday came rather quickly. As she dressed for the ocassion, she wondered , i hope he didn't forget. She hadn't heard anything from him since monday. Nothing at all. I wonder what we will do on our date? how will he act ? will he be a gentlemen? or will he kiss me first date? Or is this just an outing to get to know his tenant? how do i dress? i wish i knew more about him. I shouldn't have agreed so easily . Maybe i'll cancel.

As she thought more on this , she started laughing i can't cancel . i haven't a phone yet . i''d have to talk to him.Maybe i'll do that. she was going to chicken out. That's it.

As she thought on these things, the door rang. He was early. She wasn't ready.

"I'll be right there ,"she yelled.

She came out and went to the door and peered through the eyehole.

He was standing there with a dozen red roses. She couldn't believe it. She almost fainted.

How romantic -she thought.

"why thank you ",she stammered."

"your welcome "he smiled.

Maybe i won't chicken out. "I'll be right out '", she yelled through the door.

"Can i come in? "he politely asked

"NO"she said. "I mean,yes come in."

"Are you ready? i thought we might go out for dinner and a movie,would that be okay?"Randy said.

"Sure i guess that alright. i have to find my shoes Be right back."Erica stated.And she ran out of the room as fast as she

could . She tripped over the doorway and fell on her face. she was so embarrassed. What a way to start a date, she thought. He was laughing gently in the livingroom as she stomped to her bedroom.

"are you alright?he yelled.

She thought about it and started laughing, "i must have been nervous, i forgot to tell him my name, " she told Cindy at work later that afternoon.

What does he do when he rushes around? how does he believe? all these questions were rushing around in her head as she put her shoes on.

She walked back in the living room, grabbed her purse , and said i'm ready.

He smiled. "You never told me your name, what is it ,may I ask?

"My name is Erica." She smiled.

I have so many question,i don't know where to start, i'll wait for him to talk first.

They got in the car and he asked her where she wanted to go to eat and what she wanted to see at the movies. She wasn't sure , whatever he wanted.

I know of a nice inn in the middle of town we could go to. It isn't a bar , it's like a coffee shop , would that be okay? i guess she stammered.

Inside she thought where is this crazy guy taking me? i hope the movie is somewhere public. I'd hate to be alone with him so soon.

I really don't know him at all i'm a little nervous she thought and she started to get a little scared.

She clutched her purse in a deathgrip.

He drove quietly to the inn and they ate a gorgeous meal of veal and spaghetti with salad.

It was a large meal, plenty for both.
They enjoyed themselves over the meal immensely.

Then he asked about the movie again.

She thought inside, i still don't know him from adam. I need to talk a little before we go to the drive through or is he taking me to a movie theater? So she started talking.

"Do you mind if we get to know each other?"

Sure, he smiled again.

So they talked about trivial stuff , like the weather , her job, his job,how he believes and so forth.

It was rather windy outside (It was fall). She told him she was starting college and she had a haircutting job.He told her he was in construction and he believed in God . He didn't attend church but he would if he could find the time for it. They talked about many such things and they were comfortable around each other.

Then he brought her home and kissed her on the cheek and said good-bye and left.

She was amazed. He seemed nice enough . He didn't want anything from her. She didn't know what to think.

So she brushed her hair and teeth and went to bed and she was happy instead of downcast that day.

And she wondered will he ask me out again? I wonder.

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